

Application number 10/804,712
Amendment dated April 26, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed October 26, 2006

PATENT

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

After entry of this amendment, claims 1-31 will be pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 9, 11, 13, and 17 have been amended. Claims 3, 5, 12, and 14 were also amended to correct typographical oversights. New claims 27-31 have been added. Support for the new and amended claims can be found in the specification. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyanaga et al., United States patent number 5,514,893 (Miyanaga) in view of Verhaege et al., United States patent number 6,529,359 (Verhaege). Claims 9-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyanaga in view of Verhaege and Kwon et al., United States patent application number 20020163768. Claims 17-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyanaga in view of Verhaege, Toyashima, United States patent application number 20010017755, and Sher, United States patent number 6,417,721. Reconsideration of these rejections in view of these amendments and remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim 1

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyanaga in view of Verhaege. But this combination of references does not show each and every element of this claim. For example, claim 1, as amended, recites "an input buffer coupled between a first supply terminal and a second supply terminal and having an input directly connected to a pad." The cited references do not provide this feature.

The pending office action cites Figure 1 of Miyanaga as providing the required input buffer. (See pending office action, page 2, paragraph 2.) But the input of the input buffer in this figure is not connected directly to a pad.

Figure 1 of Miyanaga shows an input buffer 7 that is coupled to a pad through a resistor 6. Accordingly, the input buffer 7 does not have an input directly connected to a pad as required by the claim.

For at least this reason, claim 1 should be allowed.

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Claim 17

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyanaga in view of Verhaege, Toyashima, and Sher. But these references do not provide each and every limitation of this claim. For example, claim 17, as amended, recites "the switch capable of closing if opened and opening if closed under control of a first signal." The cited references do not provide this feature.

The pending office action cites Figure 2 Toyashima as providing the required switch. (See pending office action, page 6, first paragraph, which also refers back to page 4, first paragraph.) But this figure does not provide a switch that is capable of closing if opened and opening if closed under control of a first signal.

Figure 2 of Toyashima shows a fuse F1 in series with a diode D1. As the pending office action correctly points out, a fuse is not reversible if opened. (See pending office action, page 6, line 4.) That is, once it is opened, it cannot be closed to make a connection. As such, the cited fuse F1 is not a switch capable of closing if opened and opening if closed as is required by the claim.

For at least this reason, claim 17 should be allowed.

Other claims

Claim 9 should be allowed for similar reasons as claim 1. The other rejected claims depend on one of the above claims and should be allowed for at least the same reasons and for the additional limitations they recite.

CONCLUSION

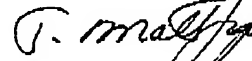
In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal notice of allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

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If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,



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